

UPDATE FROM WASHINGTON, November 2003



## CONGRESSMAN GEORGE MILLER

### “Jobless Recovery?”

Can there really be an economic recovery without new jobs? While economists in the Bush Administration may not worry about that question, most California families do. There have been some promising signs of economic growth over the past few months, and I hope they continue. But there are still serious economic problems that the policies of this Administration are failing to address. In California alone:

- Unemployment rose from 4.7% in January 2001 to 6.4% in October 2003.
- Over 320,000 people have lost jobs during that time.
- The manufacturing sector took the biggest hit — almost 300,000 lost jobs.
- Almost 24 percent of our unemployed have been without a job for more than 26 weeks.

This Administration has one economic policy — trillion dollar tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans. And it has failed to improve the economy for the rest of us. But it has created the biggest federal budget deficit in history — anticipated at \$500 billion next year — that will be passed on to our future generations to pay. I have sponsored legislation to stimulate the economy, including one bill to encourage American companies to keep manufacturing jobs in the United States. Congress is failing to force the president to change course on the economy.

### Protecting Overtime Pay

Wages are stagnant, retirement security is in jeopardy, and health insurance costs are soaring. On top of all that, the Administration is attempting to take overtime pay away from employees who work overtime — almost 8 million would be affected. As the senior Democrat on the House Education and Workforce Committee that oversees workplace laws, I am leading the fight in Congress against the Administration’s plan. Under my leadership, the House cast a bipartisan vote in October to stop the plan. But now the Administration and congressional leaders are trying to go around public opinion and the majority votes in Congress. By late November, the debate on overtime was still alive. Find out how this fight ended by calling my office or visiting my website: [www.house.gov/georgemiller/overtimepay](http://www.house.gov/georgemiller/overtimepay). Overtime pay is not a luxury — it is a necessity. I’m fighting to protect it.



*Rep. George Miller (speaking), Sen. Ted Kennedy and Sen. Tom Daschle call on Congress to protect overtime pay.*

**Over 3 million private-sector jobs have been lost since 2001**

# Defending The Environment

Protecting our environment and the great outdoors is a traditional American value. To most Californians, protecting the environment is not a slogan — it is a critical part of our economy and our communities. But that shared value is being severely tested by special interests that want government to weaken the fundamental laws that protect our air, water and land. In just the past few months, the Bush Administration and the majority leaders in Congress have decided to:

- Change pollution enforcement policy and drop investigations into at least 70 power plants for past violations of the Clean Air Act. Not only has the Administration weakened the Clean Air Act with its “New Source Review” policy, it has decided to forgive past violations that were clearly illegal at the time. And according to the Washington Post, Senate Republicans are trying to weaken it even further, by raising the allowable amount of mercury pollution from 26 tons per year to 34 tons.
- Avoid regulating dioxins contained in sewage and used as farm fertilizer. Even though dioxins are known to cause cancer, the Environmental Protection Agency has accepted industry arguments that regulating these highly toxic compounds would cost too much.
- Double the proposed logging levels for the Sierra Nevada forests. The new logging proposal overrides a popular plan that allowed for intense thinning in fire prone areas near communities while protecting ancient forests and important wildlife habitat.
- Refuse to regulate carbon dioxide released by automobiles, claiming that greenhouse gases are not actually pollutants. The Administration’s move has prompted California — which has a much



**Rep. Miller talks with constituents in Solano County about federal environmental legislation.**

more responsible law of its own — to sue the EPA to force it to take a stronger position against global warming.

- Plow ahead on a proposal to allow snowmobile use in Yellowstone National Park despite studies indicating snowmobiles, even the newer and cleaner models, pollute the air and disrupt wildlife. Four former directors of the National Park Service have renounced the snowmobile policy and a Congressional amendment to revoke the policy lost on a tie vote.

As a senior member of the House Resources Committee and the chairman of the Democratic Policy Committee, I am working with my colleagues and grass roots groups to oppose these and other dangerous changes — like threats to the Endangered Species Act and restrictions on new offshore oil drilling. But it is not easy and you can help. You can learn more about what I and other Democrats are doing for the environment at <http://democrats.house.gov/> or my personal website.



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# Making College More Affordable

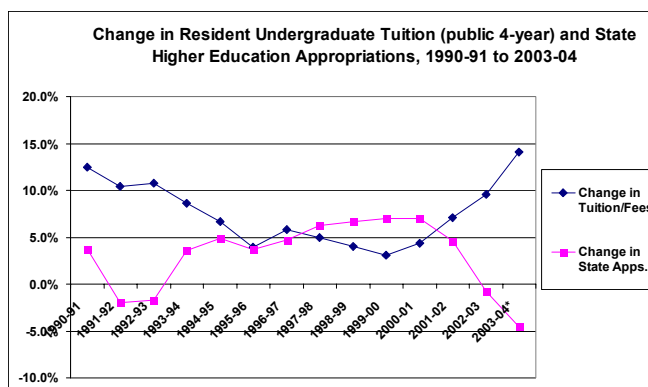
A college education is essential to succeed in today's world. But like you I am shocked by the rising cost of higher education that is a serious problem for many families.

- U.C. and Cal State each increased tuition by 30 percent this year. Community colleges have raised their tuition 64 percent this year.
- U.C. announced it will no longer be able to enroll the top 1/8th of the state's high school graduates in 2004-05, as it had committed to do. Cal State cut enrollment growth from 7 percent to 4.3 percent. Approximately 90,000 college-qualified students have been turned away from our community colleges.

There is an urgent need to control the rising cost of college, while also continuing to make college accessible. The reasons for the increased cost of higher education are complex. But the main culprit is state budget cuts, caused in large part from the weak economy, the Bush Administration's trillion-dollar tax cuts for the wealthy, and record federal budget deficits. Students and their families are forced to absorb a bigger and bigger share of the cost of higher education. Class sizes are going up, teacher salaries going down, and classes are being cancelled, and student indebtedness is soaring.

As the Senior Democrat on the House Education and the Workforce Committee, I have just introduced new legislation to hold states and colleges more accountable for the cost of tuition. Under my College Affordability and Accountability Act:

- States would be penalized if they continue to cut funding for public colleges and universities, even in tough economic times.



- Colleges would be given an incentive to control their tuition increases, becoming eligible for additional federal student aid, like Pell grants, if they hold tuition costs in line. In addition, schools that lock in low tuition rates to their incoming classes of freshman through their time to graduation would receive additional federal student aid.
- Students and their families would have access to accurate information about the cost of college and steps individual schools are taking to control tuition hikes.
- The Education Department would establish a national online college price calculator to allow students and families to determine how much a particular college will cost for them to attend.

The Republican majority has a plan of its own – to deny federal financial aid to students at schools that raise their tuition too much. But their plan will only penalize students while doing nothing to control the cost of college. Learn more about my bill at [www.house.gov/georgemiller/highereducation](http://www.house.gov/georgemiller/highereducation).



To get the latest on this and other issues, visit [www.house.gov/georgemiller/](http://www.house.gov/georgemiller/)

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## UPDATE FROM WASHINGTON

This mailing was prepared, published and mailed at taxpayer expense.

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### The War in Iraq

The situation in Iraq is a grave tragedy. I hold in my thoughts the families and friends of the thousands of wounded and the more than 400 U.S. military personnel who have been killed in Iraq since the war began, including more than 300 since "major combat operations" supposedly ended on May 1. While I have serious concerns about American policy in Iraq, the men and women in uniform, including the National Guard and Reserve, are serving their country with distinction and deserve our support.

Americans were assured that the pacification and reconstruction of Iraq would be quick, easy and inexpensive. None of this turned out to be true. What we have now learned is that because of the Administration's failure to have any plan to win the peace, our soldiers were made even more vulnerable to attack.

I voted against the President's latest request for an additional \$87 billion for Iraq and Afghanistan because there was no change in policy and no guarantee that the necessary steps to protect our troops and end this war were being taken.

I am also concerned that this war has undermined America's international reputation. As Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security advisor to President Jimmy Carter, recently wrote, "The recent conduct of U.S. foreign policy, by distorting the threats facing America, has isolated the United States and undermined its credibility... If a case ever needs to be made for action against an imminent threat, will any nation take us seriously?"

> The evidence now clearly shows that there was no imminent threat by Iraq to the United States before the war started.

> The decision to go to war alone has turned out to be enormously costly to our nation in terms of lives lost, cost to the taxpayer, international reputation, and our ability to win the peace.

> Our failure to prepare for the aftermath of the war has been devastating. The Defense Department rejected warnings from experts regarding the likelihood of widespread looting, attacks on troops, and infrastructure damage for which our personnel were not trained or properly equipped.